

of the aisle would impose the largest tax increase in American history, nearly \$400 billion over the next 5 years. Their plan would institute a \$3,000 tax increase for every typical Michigander and put off needed entitlement reform for at least another 5 years.

Congress needs to pass a balanced budget bill without raising taxes. We need to make tax relief permanent for hardworking American families and reform unsustainable entitlements. The American people long for a Congress that puts our fiscal house in order on a Federal level, but they want this done without expanding the size and scope of the Federal Government.

I urge my colleagues to oppose any budget plan that proposes a "spend now, reform later" mentality.

PRESIDENT REFUSES TO CHANGE COURSE AND CALLS HOUSE ACTION POLITICAL THEATER

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, last week the Democratic House delivered on its promise to move the Iraq war in a new direction. We approved a very serious piece of legislation that includes the recommendations of the President, the nonpartisan Iraq Study Group and the Pentagon. The President responded to our action by describing it as political theater and threatening a Presidential veto.

How can this be political theater if we are putting some real teeth into the benchmarks that the President himself established for the Iraqi government earlier this year? Let's not forget the President's own words: "I've made it clear to the Prime Minister and Iraq's other leaders that America's commitment is not open-ended. If the Iraqi government does not follow through on its promises, it will lose the support of the American people," said President Bush. Those were his words.

This legislation passed last week puts in law the President's demands that the Iraqis meet his benchmarks. You would think the President would support such action. Instead, he calls it political theater. So much for holding the Iraqi government accountable. The President should reconsider his veto threat. It could be the theater of the absurd.

HOUSE OVERSIGHT OF BUSH ADMINISTRATION IS LEADING TO RESULTS IN THE U.S. ATTORNEYS SCANDAL

(Mr. SIREs asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, they say when you have bad news, get it out on Friday night. That's exactly what happened last Friday when the Justice Department released documents indicating that Attorney General Gonzales led a meeting of top aides to discuss

the firing of U.S. Attorneys. This document completely contradicts the Attorney General's own statement that he did not participate in any discussion and only had cursory knowledge of the U.S. Attorney dismissals.

The Attorney General's contradictions were followed yesterday by a Justice Department official taking the fifth and refusing to testify. This is unacceptable, particularly after Gonzales himself said that all Justice Department officials would be made available to Congress.

The administration needs to make Justice Department and White House officials available to Congress so that we can continue to provide oversight. This Congress will continue to ask tough questions so that we may ensure U.S. Attorneys are free from political pressure.

THE DEMOCRATIC BUDGET

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. George Bush and the Republicans have spent our country to the verge of bankruptcy. They have doubled our foreign debt. They have increased our national debt by 60 percent. George Bush has accumulated more debt than every President who preceded him in the United States of America and they have done it on the credit card.

And guess who is going to get the bill in their world after they eliminate taxes for the wealthy? It's going to be the middle class, and they're going to get hit twice. They're going to get the bill, and their kids and grandkids are going to get the bill. And the programs that middle-income Americans need like tuition assistance for their kids to go to college, the Bushies cut those. That's their sense of fiscal responsibility.

The other side over here, the gentleman from North Carolina is saying, oh, the largest tax increase in history.

No. We're allowing the tax cuts for the wealthiest among us, people who earn over \$250,000 a year, people who have estates worth more than \$5 million, we're asking that once again they pay their fair share. There will not be a penny increase on middle-income families. They can make up anything they want, but it's not true.

But, yes, the wealthy would pay a little bit more. That's why they're squealing so much, because the Republicans get their money from the wealthy to try and maintain control of our country.

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SALUTE TO CORPORAL FLETCHER

(Mrs. CAPITO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, "hero" is not a label that should be employed

carelessly, and in a time when our country has many heroes serving abroad, I rise today to honor a hero at home: Corporal Ronald Fletcher.

A member of the Jefferson County Sheriffs Department, Corporal Fletcher was pursuing a burglary suspect into a home last month when he was shot twice in the chest and once in the arm.

At only 26 years old, he lay seriously wounded in the house with the suspect until his fellow deputies were able to remove him safely.

Today, just one short month after the incident, I am proud to share that Corporal Fletcher is home and well on his way to recovery. As a testimony to his profound sense of duty, he recently complained about being bored in his home full of fruit baskets and is eager to return to service.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the heroism of Corporal Fletcher and the valor of the Jefferson County Sheriffs Department. West Virginia is sincerely grateful for their service.

RESTORING FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, for too long, many of America's toughest challenges have gone unaddressed while massive debt was piled on the backs of our young generations.

Now, this Democratic-led House has proposed a budget that takes our Nation in a new direction and reaches balance in 5 years while lowering the deficit. By contrast, the President's proposed budget does not achieve balance at all, despite his promises to do so.

The House budget also puts in place pay-as-you-go spending principles, finally requiring our government to balance and prioritize spending the way all American families must do. Restoring fiscal integrity is not only good for the budget's bottom line, but it is also important in protecting our national security, since much of our Nation's debt is owed to foreign governments.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic budget resolution begins the process of restoring fiscal integrity to the leftover Republican mess of reckless spending and massive deficits. It is time for a balanced budget that meets the needs of American families without mortgaging our future to foreign interests.

DEMOCRATS' MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 110TH CONGRESS

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, over the last 3 months, this new Democratic House has paved the way for a new direction in America.

During the first 100 hours, we passed legislation increasing the minimum